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# The Effect of Stress on the Younger Generation

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**ABSTRACT:** Stress, anxiety, extreme fear, and nervousness have become common in the Youth. With covid-19, Stress on people has aggravated. It is a feeling when people work under pressure. It is believed that Youth is more stressed nowadays, which is much contributed to an unhealthy lifestyle and working under extreme pressure.

**KEYWORDS:** stress, younger generation, lifestyle, pressure, covid-19

## I. INTRODUCTION

Stress could be emotional or physical, and extreme Stress leads to unwanted results. Stress directly affects the mental health of the person. Everyone faces pressure in their life; it is how you deal with it that is more important. A person should have a clear understanding of how Stress is affecting their mental health. Experts point out that little degree of Stress is good for humans, but extreme Stress is disastrous for the human mind. Earlier, children did not experience Stress in their life, but the scene has changed. Now children between 9-12 claim that they are under Stress. It is primarily attributed to study overload and academic routine.

### Symptoms of Stress

Experts treat Stress as long-term or short-term. Chronic Stress is hazardous and significantly impacts the human mind and health. Common signs of Stress are:

All Stress does not produce a negative result. A little stress is required to break the inertia and is good for the human mind. Different types of Stress are:[1,2,3]

- **Chronic Stress:** This type of Stress is inescapable and never-ending, and this Stress generally happens due to an extremely tiring job or bad marriage. It can also be generated if the person remembers their past traumatic experiences.
- **Episodic Acute Stress:** This Stress is treated in the short term and could act as a positive for the person. This Stress is very common among people, and people experience it very often. This Stress is generated due to certain events that have occurred in their ongoing life.
- **Eustress:** This Stress is exciting and amazing. It is related to the flow of adrenaline. It is treated as positive Stress that keeps people energetic.

### Cause of Stress

A lot of factors contribute to generating Stress in a person's life. Some major causes of Stress are parenting, relationships, pressurized work, financial problems, and inconvenient day-to-day activities.

Stress happens as a response to these challenges, and certain hormones like cortisol and adrenaline are released in this process. Experts say that Stress is a response to a perceived threat. When this perception is passed, the mind automatically goes to a relaxation response. This relaxation response is seldom generated in the body as the body is constantly fighting the perceived notion of threat. Stress can turn people to adopt unhealthy habits. For example, people start smoking or eating too much to avoid Stress. These things directly affect human health and will have negative consequences.

When you see a perceived threat, the Hypothalamus, which is present at the base of the human brain, starts reacting. It generates hormone and nerve signals to the adrenal glands, which causes the production of many hormones. Hormones make you prepare to fight the threat and your probability of survival increases. Adrenaline supplements in:

- Stimulate perspiration
- Increase your breathing rate



- Inhibit insulin production
- Contraction of the blood vessel to direct blood into the muscles
- Help the muscle to use glucose
- Enhances the rate of heartbeat

Surges of Adrenaline can produce results like

- Weight gain
- Headaches
- Ruptured blood vessels
- Increased risk of stroke and heart attack
- Anxiety
- Ruptured blood vessels
- Insomnia

Cortisol and Stress[4,5,6]

Cortisol, the important stress hormone, has a significant role in a stressful scenario. Function include are

- Alteration of immune system response.
- Increasing the quantity of glucose in the bloodstream.
- Affects that area of the brain that controls mood, fear, and motivation.
- Aids the brain in the utilization of glucose in an effective way.
- Dampens the reproductive system and growth process
- Increasing the accessibility of material that supplements tissue repair.

A high level of cortisol will have negative repercussions on your body:

- Weak immune system (Vulnerable to infections)
- Memory problems and memory cloudiness
- Weight gain
- Diabetes (type 2)
- Sleep problems
- Osteoporosis
- Lack of energy

Stress and Anxiety

People treat Stress and anxiety as the same. An immense feeling of Stress generates feeling of anxiety. Anxiety makes it very difficult for people to cope with Stress. Anxiety could lead to digestive problems, increased depression, and susceptibility to illness.

It also leads to muscle tension, high blood pressure, and poor sleep. Experts say that anxiety is an internal reaction to Stress. Stress might get away from the body, but anxiety remains in the body for a longer period.

Effects of Stress

Stress severely damages the well-being of a person. It makes daily life challenging and damages personal relationships, and have a damaging effect on human health. When a person is under immense Stress, they behave accordingly. It sometimes takes an emotional toll on people, and a light degree of Stress may generate frustrations and mild anxiety, but prolonged Stress could generate depression, anxiety disorder, and burnout. Some of the stress-generated problems are:

- Diabetes
- Ulcers
- Obesity
- Tooth and Gum Disease
- Heart Disease
- Hair loss



- Sexual Dysfunction
- Hyperthyroidism

#### Stress Treatment[7,8,9]

This problem does not have a particular treatment. Some of the experimented techniques that have been useful in dealing with problem stress are complementary and Alternative medicine, therapy, and medication, but stress treatment mainly deals with the development of Stress coping skills and the implementation of relaxation techniques.

- Medication: Medications are given to treat some symptoms of Stress. Such medication involves anti-anxiety medications, sleep aids, antidepressants and antacids.
- Psychotherapy: Some known therapies for successfully treating Stress include mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). MBSR uses mindfulness and meditation as a tool to lower Stress. Cognitive Behavioural therapy uses to generate positive feelings and avoiding negative emotions.
- Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Complementary methods that help lower stress levels are meditation, yoga, acupuncture, massage, and aromatherapy.

## II. DISCUSSION

### Source of Stress in Young Minds

Tension at home for the young is a common source. Children may be affected due to separation, divorce, loss, or family discord, but tension and Stress are not limited to the home. Experts claim that one of the major sources of Stress in young kids is school. School burdens children with an overload of work. They get anxious, nervous, and stressed when they hear about tests, grades, and exams.

### Stress in Teenagers and Adolescents

As children grow up, the sources of Stress grow up. Study shows that Teens get more easily stressed than young kids. Experts see a significant rise in mental health problems in both age groups. Earlier, this was prevalent mostly in the adult group, and now they have also started affecting teens and children. It is a cause of concern. Peers can help reduce Stress, and the development of social relationships helps reduce Stress, particularly during adolescence.

### Signs of Stress

- Sleeping Problems: A person may feel tired, sleep more than the required time, and not fall asleep at night.
- Eating Behaviour: It is seen that people under Stress start eating too much or eat too little. These reaction points toward the issue of Stress.
- Irritation and Anger: Youth sometimes tries to avoid showing its feeling, and this leads to frustration and anger among Youth. Stressed youths may behave as argumentative and short-tempered.
- Frequent Change in Behaviour: Mood swings problems are common who are stressed out. Some of the observed symptoms are that once active Youth does not intends to leave his home.
- Sickness: Stress can also be visible with physical symptoms. Youth of today claims stomachache, headaches, and pain.
- Simple Ways to Cope with the Stress
- Stress affects all people, but it is manageable. There are some simple steps that you can adopt to combat Stress and lower its impact:
- Regular Exercise: Experts and Scientists from every corner of the world have advocated for regular exercise. They have said that simple exercises lower the stress level. Simple exercises could include jogging, long walking, stretching, skipping, jumping, pull-ups, and push up if possible. Performing simple exercises regularly will keep your mental health in a balanced state.
- Identifying the Signs of Burnout: High levels of burnout contribute significantly to enhancing stress levels. Burnout is the condition of emotional or physical exhaustion that gives a sense of reduced fulfilment and loss of identity. Depression is also a reason behind burnout. When you experience emotional exhaustion, you need to understand that time has come to handle the Stress.
- Care Yourself: Bring regular care activities into your daily life, which is an important element in lowering Stress. Give your soul, mind, and body some time to recover, replenish, and reboot. Explore the methods to live life to the fullest.



- Performing Mindfulness: Mindfulness is a simple human ability and state of being conscious. Explore ideas and methods to live your day in a state of mindfulness.
- Role of Parents in Dealing with Stress
- Parents and close friends are crucial in healing stressed, depressed, and nervous people. Loss of parental contact and family problems are listed as causes of Stress, but they can help significantly reduce the Stress of their child. They can make their children's lives bright by incorporating a healthy lifestyle and stress-managing strategies.[10,11,12]
- Fighting Negative Feelings and Thinking: Youth is easily susceptible to negative thoughts and seen pronouncing sentences like "I'm horrible in maths", "My life has become hell", and "There is nothing good in the world". When your child demonstrates such feelings, remind them how they have worked hard to improve their lives and faced the same situations while growing up.
- Let Youth Fight Themselves: It is obvious that every parent wants to fix their child's problems. Parents helping their child at every level will deprive him of developing his coping skills. Give your son a chance to solve problems involving a low level of risk. Through it, they will have confidence in dealing with setbacks.
- Become a Model to Your Child: Parents can narrate their stories of how they have dealt with problems while growing up. It will motivate their child.
- Mental Health Institutions in India
- These are central government-backed mental health institutions.
- Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi.
- Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi Regional Institute of Mental Health, Tezpur.
- National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, Bangalore.
- According to Government data, there are 40 state-run hospitals and 398 Departments of Psychiatry. Some of the state and central government-run mental health hospitals are given below
- The Medical Superintendent Psychiatric Diseases hospital GMC, Jammu, Ambphalla B.C. Road.
- Karanataka Institute of Mental Health, Belgaum Road, Dharwad, Karnataka.
- Central Institute of Psychiatry, Kanke, Ranchi Jharkhand
- Ranchi Institute for Neuropsychiatry and Allied Science, Ranchi (RINPAS).
- Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences, GT Road, Jhilmil, Delhi.

Parliament cleared legislation called Mental Health Care Act 2017 on 7 April 2017. The laws recognize that people with mental illness are a vulnerable section of society and face discrimination from society. The Government also came out with the National Mental Health Programme in 1982.

Three major parts of the National Mental Health Programme

- |                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Prevention and Promotion of positive mental health |
| 2. Treatment of Mentally ill                          |
| 3. Rehabilitation                                     |

Objective

- Ensuring accessibility and availability of minimum health care for all in the future.
- Boosting Human resources in mental health subspecialties.
- Encouraging the application of mental health knowledge in general healthcare and social development.
- Promoting community-level participation in mental health service development.

The Government wanted to take this program to the district level, so they came up with District Mental Health Program.

Objective

- Treat and rehabilitate people with a mental health conditions within the community.
- Early detection and treatment of patients within the community itself



- To provide sustainable basic mental health services to the community and to integrate these services with other health services.
- To reduce the stigma of mental illness through public awareness.

### III. RESULTS

We discovered that the younger generation, those aged 18-34, are almost three times more likely to say they are feeling stressed than the older generation 65+, according to a national survey we commissioned on the topic of stress and anxiety.

Almost 90% of people aged 18-34 say they currently feel stressed, compared to just a third of people aged 65+. Younger people are feeling the pressure in all parts of their lives rating their stress 'generally' at a 3 out of 5 in our stress-scale findings. However, the most carefree are those aged 65+ who score just 1 on the same scale.

One of the main factors in driving anxiety and worry across the country has been the pressure to 'return to normal' quicker than people are comfortable with (29%). A third of people said that the pressure to 'return to normal' has been coming from work, with nearly half of people aged between 35 – 44 (47%) stating that as the reason. While for over 65s the pressure to return to normal is most likely to come from their families.[13,14,15]

Aidan Goggins, Pharmacist, Nutritionist and member of FutureYou Cambridge advisory board says we should be looking after our stress levels more:

“Stress is an inescapable reality of everyday life. However, the increased and persistent levels that the pandemic has brought about not only affects how we feel but greatly contributes to our risk of physical and mental health. “Ashwagandha is an age old ayurvedic adaptogen claimed to promote “youthful vigour” by increasing our resilience to stresses. Pharmacological studies now support this showing it reduces levels of the stress hormone cortisol and exerts beneficial antioxidant and anti-inflammatory actions”

The findings illustrate that the increasing strain has led to half of people saying this has impacted their sleep, a third say it has made them argue with their partners and a quarter say their intimacy with their spouse has taken a blow.

Symptoms of chronic stress can take many forms, but for a third it has made them short tempered, 28% say it affects their focus, while for a fifth stress makes them eat more than usual. To cope with their feelings, the survey shows that people have been turning to exercise (35%), eating healthier (22%) and spending time (where able to) with their family and friends. On the negative side, some are using alcohol as a coping mechanism (16%). However, despite these attempts to alleviate stress, only 1 in 10 used a health supplement to help ease their feelings, 7% have asked for medical advice with only 6% consulting a counselling service.

Currently, the nation appears stressed to some degree, with just under 2 in 3 mentioning this. Sleep has been a sizeable factor to be affected because of this, with just over 1 in 2 saying it had been affected, with around a third saying they had experienced losing sleep because of stress and anxiety, and around 1 in 4 said they were sleeping less now vs last year

#### Research methodology

An online survey was conducted by Atomik Research among 2,008 respondents from the UK. The research fieldwork took place on 30th April – 5th May 2021. Atomik Research is an independent creative market research agency that employs MRS-certified researchers and abides to theMRS code. Here are some additional results about how we're currently feeling.

#### Key findings include:

- Monday was by the far the day of the week people felt the most stressed – with 43% saying this with the key time being 11.15 am.
- 53% (the highest proportion) said that their sleep was affected by their stress.
- 29% said they were feeling pressured to return to normal life.
- Those in Engineering (25%) and IT (20%) were most likely to say they felt stressed all of the time.



- Across the UK those in London are most likely currently feeling stressed with 71%, which is higher than the 61% national average. While the least stressed are those in Scotland.[16,17,18]

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Stress is a normal and healthy part of our nervous system. However, too much stress can be difficult to manage and become problematic.

Everyone experiences stress for different reasons. This can vary for different generations.

Research has shown that stress in teenagers and young adults is higher than in older Australians. The good news is that most of us can usually manage the stress caused by issues with relationships, finances, and health.

Stress is a natural human response to the pressure you feel from challenging or dangerous situations. In healthy amounts, it motivates us to respond to the challenging thing. In unhelpful amounts, stress can lead to less useful coping strategies like avoidance.[19]

Common symptoms and signs of too much stress include:

- feeling anxious or overwhelmed
- feeling wound-up or worried
- feeling irritable
- disturbed sleep
- sweating
- headaches
- appetite loss
- muscle tension
- an upset stomach
- difficulty concentrating

Stress can last for a long time or overwhelm your coping abilities. Stress can have a negative impact on every aspect of your life including your:

- work
- relationships
- physical and mental health

Unmanaged stress can contribute to mental illness.

Stress and young people

Research shows that young Australian adults are more stressed than older generations. They are also more likely to report mental health concerns than older Australians.

There are differences in the high levels of distress reported in 2020-2021 in younger and older Australians. These figures are:

- 9% of Australians aged 65 to 85 years report high levels of distress
- 28% of Australians aged 16 to 34 years report high levels of distress

There are many reasons why young people will experience stress. These include:

- academic pressure
- body image
- bullying
- emotional and physical abuse
- family dynamics and violence
- personal finances
- relationships
- substance abuse
- trying to keep a healthy lifestyle

How do I manage stress?

There are ways that you can reduce feelings of stress.



If you are feeling stressed, it is important to try and find the cause of your stress. First of all, find out what is stressing you. Consider what you can change and what you can't control.

What can I do?

Do things you enjoy regularly, even if you don't feel like doing them.

This may include:

- being with people who care about you
- dancing
- listening to music
- walking in nature
- You may also be able to help keep stress levels down by:
- recognising unhelpful sources of stress — including pressures you place on yourself — before they become a bigger problem
- thinking about changes you can make to improve your situation and change the way you behave

To manage feelings of stress, you can:

- practice deep breathing, meditation and other relaxation techniques
- practice positive self-talk
- write in a 'stress diary' to record when you feel stressed and why
- exercise regularly
- eat a healthy diet
- avoid smoking
- reduce alcohol and caffeine intake
- avoid overworking

It can be difficult to talk about stress with your school, college, university, or employer. However, if you are feeling stressed about work or study, they may be able to provide support.

Talk to others if you can — you may well have family and friends who are willing to help.

Keep things in perspective. Don't underestimate yourself. However, if you cannot control something, try to direct your energy elsewhere.

Seeking help

Many people need professional help to make lasting changes to reduce their stress levels. This may include talking to your doctor.

Your doctor may recommend stress management classes. They can also help diagnose any mental health issues or refer you to a psychologist. By addressing the cause of your stress, they can help provide you with the best advice and treatment.

There are also programs and resources available to young people experiencing stress and mental health issues.[20]

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